

Naval War College Review

Volume 36

Number 1 *January-February*

Article 20

1983

The Military Balance 1982-1983

James John Tritten

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Tritten, James John (1983) "The Military Balance 1982-1983," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 36 : No. 1 , Article 20.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol36/iss1/20>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

not to be trusted. His book begins with a chapter on the maxims of war before Napoleon. Here he misses the essential and revealing context of the pre-Napoleonic maxims. From Giles of Rome in the high Middle Ages to Frederick the Great, these maxims and reflections were a standard element of absolutist political science expressed in mirrors for princes and political testaments. Written from the ruler's perspective and meant to be useful, these writings necessarily sacrificed rigor, science, and universality for immediacy and specificity. *Kriegstheorie*, a genuine theory of war for the ages, had to wait for Clausewitz.

For the era since Napoleon, Alger gives a chronology, history, and reference work. Leaving aside bibliography and index, fully a fourth of the book is reference material. It ranges from a list of book titles of the genre in question to extracts ranging from Machiavelli to FM 100-1 (1978), telling us all, perhaps more than all, that we care to know.

The book certainly fills a lacuna; especially for the era since J.F.C. Fuller (here cut down to size) it provides a useful overview.

JOHN TASHJEAN
Arlington, Virginia

International Institute for Strategic Studies. *The Military Balance 1982-1983*. London: 1982. 141pp. \$14

Each year the prestigious London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies publishes their *Military Balance*. This study is considered a primary source for most of the academic world and by the press. The 1982-1983 edition has just recently appeared and has some significant material of interest to Navy officers.

IISS now credits the Soviet Union's submarine force with a MIRV capability

on both the SS-N-6 and the SS-N-8 submarine-launched ballistic missiles. Previously, a MIRV capability for the SS-N-6 was only documented in one table of DOD's *Soviet Military Power* (while it was referred to as a MRV capable missile in the text).

In addition to the obvious strategic significance of this possible new missile capability, the MIRVing of the SS-N-6 and SS-N-8 has a dramatic impact on arms control. Under SALT II, any launcher which has been tested or developed for a MIRV missile means that all such launchers are considered MIRVed.

Using IISS data, the Soviets would now appear to have 1,700 MIRV missile launchers. This means that they would be some 500 in excess of the SALT II limits if the SS-N-6 and SS-N-8 are in fact MIRVed. Naturally there will be those who can argue that the MIRVing of these two missiles is debatable.

Less debatable is the overall tabulation of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles. According to the *Military Balance*, the Soviets now have some 2,498 total vehicles which are accountable under SALT II. According to that Treaty, which has not been ratified, the USSR was to have reduced its total to 2,250 by the end of 1981. It is obvious that they have not and that the assertion of this noncompliance made by former President Jimmy Carter in his book *Keeping Faith* is correct.

It is difficult to ascertain how much credibility to place in the *Military Balance*. For example, the B-1A aircraft is SALT II accountable yet is not listed in IISS data for the United States. *Jane's Fighting Ships* and *Combat Fleets of the World* both credit the USSR with GOLF IV and V submarines, whose launchers would be SALT I and II accountable, yet these submarines and their launchers do not appear in the *Military Balance*.

There are internal inconsistencies also. The SS-NX-20 submarine-launched missile is listed in the front of the facts section but does not appear in the analysis section where the overall superpower strategic nuclear balance is tabulated. Under the section on the East-West Conventional Balance, IISS assumes that all but 53 nonstrategic submarines would be available for a Nato conflict. In the facts section, they state that the Pacific Fleet contains 95 such submarines.

Their analysis of the Nato scenario makes many interesting assumptions besides the numbers of submarines. They state that ships available to the Soviet Union for a Nato conflict would be any assigned to the Northern, Baltic, or Black Sea Fleets. By taking the totals from the

fact section and subtracting those earmarked for a Nato conflict, IISS is assuming that the Soviet Pacific Fleet would draw down to 15 cruise missile subs, 38 attack subs, 7 cruisers, and 17 destroyers.

The IISS *Military Balance* will undoubtedly remain a major source for the academic world and the press. Those who choose to use it for primary documentation should be very careful to check for internal inconsistencies in addition to cross-checking data with other available material.

JAMES JOHN TRITTEN
Commander, US Navy
University of Southern California

Recent Books

Selected Accessions of the Naval War College Library

Annotated by

Doris Baginski, George Scheck

Mary Ann Varoutsos, and Jane Viti

Brook-Shepherd, Gordon. *November 1918*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1981. 461pp. \$19.95 In this panoramic view of the last hundred days of the First World War, Brook-Shepherd shows how the battlefields of Italy, Palestine, the Balkans, and the Western Front affected its resolution. The military positions of the principal combatants are linked to both the peacemaking process and the collapse of three empires. Drawing upon personal reminiscences, letters, diaries, memoirs, and archives, the author tells much of the story in the words of participants from all sides. They range from soldiers in the frontline trenches to diplomats and statesmen in the drawing rooms of Europe and America. Since few studies have concentrated on the final phase of the war, his approach provides an interesting overview of the culmination of the global struggle.